

WRITE IT DOWN!

A People Praying

What in the World is the Church?

Colossians 1:9-14

November 25, 2007

LISTEN UP!

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I. A People Praying to Know the Gospel.

How do we pray?

1. Pray Patiently. (9)
2. Pray _____. (9)

What do we pray for?

1. Pray to know the fullness of God's will. (9)
2. Pray to know discernment that leads _____. (10)

Why do we pray to know the Gospel?

1. Pray to _____. (10)
2. Pray to _____. (10)

II. A People Praying to Live Out the Gospel.

1. Fruitfully _____. (10)
2. Increasingly _____. (10)
3. Steadfastly _____. (11)
4. Joyfully _____. (12)

III. A People Praying by the Power of the Gospel.

1. Because He _____ us. (13)
2. Because He _____ us. (14)
3. Because He _____ us. (14)

THINK IT OVER!

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1. Read Colossians 1:1-23. For what reason (v. 9) does Paul give praying in vv. 3-8? What does Paul go on to explain in vv. 15-23? How does this help frame the prayer in vv. 9-14?
2. Compare and contrast some other prayers of Paul with this one. Read Phil 1:9-11; Eph 1:15-23; 1 Thess 3:11-13; 2 Thess 1:11-12. What patterns do you see emerging? What differences are there between this sampling of his prayers?
3. Read vv. 9-10 again. What is the relationship between understanding and the way we live our lives? How does our theology (understanding about who God is and the way He works in the world) interact with the practical realities of life? Why do you think this relationship was so important to Paul?
4. Check out the four participial phrases (that's the phrases with the big "-ing" words!) in vv. 10-12—bearing fruit, increasing in knowledge, being strengthened, giving thanks. Why does Paul pray for these issues for the Colossians? What types of issues are missing from his prayer list? What does that say about the priorities of prayer?
5. How do vv. 13-14 fit in the flow of Paul's prayer and thought here? What do these verses keep in front of the Colossians and us?

WORK IT OUT!

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1. What did you like about this text and message? What moved you? What challenged you? What was new or unexpected?
2. What types of issues prompt us to prayer most? What things are often on our hearts and minds and prompt us to prayer today? What motivates us to pray?
3. In what situation do you need to pray more patiently and/or expectantly? What keeps you from hanging in there on this issue, or for this person?
4. How would our prayers look if we followed Paul's concerns more? What types of things would we pray for and how is that different or the same as what we usually do now? Are our requests worthy of prayer? What are some possible barriers to praying more like Paul?
5. What would God have to change in your life to answer prayers about the "-ings" of your life? Where do you need to be fruitfully working? How do you need to increasingly grow in knowing God? In what situation(s) so do you need to steadfastly Endure? For what do you need to joyfully thank the Lord? Share with your group one of these areas and why it would mean change for you.
6. How do the Gospel realities of vv 13-14 convict, encourage and motivate us to truly seek the Lord in prayer?